

# Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

## Higher number of public high school graduates headed to college

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**Contact Information:**

**Note to Editors: Information on individual high schools is available at**  
<http://kcews.ky.gov/HSFeedbackReports.aspx>.

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 12, 2013)** — About 3 out of every 5 of Kentucky's public high school Class of 2011 enrolled in college for the 2011-2012 academic year, exceeding the previous year's enrollment, the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics (KCEWS) announced today in its release of the 2013 Kentucky High School Feedback Report.

"This report provides the best information about college going and freshman year success that we have ever seen," said Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Secretary Thomas O. Zawacki. "It is the perfect example of why Kentucky continues to be a national leader in data use to improve education and training."

The report revealed that of the 44,853 Kentucky public high school graduates in 2011, 60.2 percent or 27,014 enrolled in some form of higher education compared to 61.4 percent of those who graduated in 2010, a total of 26,858 students. Even though more students attended college, the actual college-going rate dropped marginally in part because of the increasing number of high school graduates, said Charles McGrew, Ph.D., executive director of KCEWS.

"Kentucky has made great strides in increasing its public high school graduation rates in recent years, but today's global economy requires more than just a high school diploma," said Education Commissioner Terry Holliday. "The future of Kentucky's students – and the economic well-being of the Commonwealth – depends on their ability to acquire education and training after they graduate high school. The 2013 Kentucky High School Feedback Report gives educators, parents and community members valuable information they can use as they strive to increase student achievement and better prepare their students to succeed in college and the workforce."

The 2013 report includes individual reports for 228 public high schools in the state and is based on 2011-2012 college enrollment data, not surveys of students. Reports are not provided for alternative programs, but students from those schools are included in the district-level figures.

In addition to information about each of Kentucky's public high schools, the report includes comparable data about school districts, the proportion from each school that went to college and the types of schools

they are attending, ACT scores and information by race and family income. The reports come out annually and provide feedback a year after each class graduates. KCEWS is working to shorten the reporting time to include the most recent class of graduates who attend college in the current fall term.

“The newly designed High School Feedback Report will prove to be a powerful tool helping university educators better serve our incoming students, and to prepare the next generation of teachers,” said Bob King, president of the Council on Postsecondary Education. “It will also help K-12 educators fine tune their curriculum, centered around the Common Core Standards, to closely align what their students are learning to the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful in college and in their careers.”

“This year’s report expands on previous High School Feedback Reports because for the first time we followed a recent group of public high school graduates from Kentucky to determine how many attend college, how well they were prepared, and how well they did in college in terms of grades and progress toward completing a degree at an in-state public four-year university or KCTCS college during the 2010-2011 academic year,” said McGrew.

Although 61 percent of the previous year’s high school graduates went to college, 52 percent of them attended both the fall and spring semesters, and only 46 percent of those high school graduates from 2010 completed their first year and returned for the second, according to the report.

“Even though more than 90 percent of the 2010 graduating high school class that attended one of our in-state public schools entered as full-time students, only 15 percent actually earned a full-year of college-level course hours (30 college credit hours) during their first year. This is important because by the end of the first year, 85 percent who attended college from this class of graduates were already off track to graduate from college on time,” said McGrew.

Students must earn 30 college-level hours per year to complete a 60-hour degree in two years or a 120-hour bachelor’s degree in four years.

The report also illustrates the importance of preparing all high school graduates for success in college. The high school students who graduated in 2010 who were not ready for college-level coursework were only about half as likely to attend college (43 percent compared to 88 percent) as those who were assessed as college ready. College readiness is based on meeting all the English, math and reading benchmarks during the statewide junior year ACT assessment.

“The students who were not ready for college-level work but still chose to attend a college or university earned considerably lower grades than their college-ready counterparts with average GPAs of 2.01 compared to 2.83 for those who were ready. They also earned an average of less than one-half a year’s college credit during their first year of school,” McGrew said about the high school students who graduated in 2010.

This year’s report has additional information about student success in college including comparisons of high school to college grades by subject to identify the alignment between the education levels and data about financial aid for college for the Class of 2010.

Of the 2011 high school graduates currently enrolled in college, the highest numbers are at the University of Kentucky (2,376) and Western Kentucky University (2,340). Of the 9 percent enrolled in out-of-state schools, Indiana University Southeast had the highest number enrolled at 116, according to the report.

The statewide college-going rate for African-Americans in the Class of 2011 is 55.7 percent. The college-going rate for females in the class is 67 percent while the rate for males is 53.5 percent.

Among the high school data on the 2011 graduates, Brown School in Jefferson County had the highest college-going rate at 94.9 percent and Paintsville High School had the second highest at 93.6 percent. Four high schools had a 90 percent or higher college-going rate, while six had a rate of less than 40 percent.

“This information is useful in making sure that Kentucky’s high school students are prepared for postsecondary schools,” said McGrew. “We encourage parents, educators, school board members, officials and others to use this information to see how their local schools and districts compare across the state.”

To view the report, including individual high school and district information, go to

<http://kcews.ky.gov/HSFeedbackReports.aspx>.

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*KCEWS is a newly created state office whose role is to collect information about education and workforce at all levels to better inform policy making statewide. It maintains the Kentucky Longitudinal Data System which securely links information from the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE), the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB), the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority, and the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. The goal is to create a system that spans early childhood, K-12, postsecondary, financial aid, teacher licensure and preparation and other areas to develop a broader understanding about the education and training process as a seamless system.*